

Virginia Complete Count Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2019
Patrick Henry Building
1111 E. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219
West Reading Room
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Attendees: *Reggie Tupponce, Gilbert Bland, Terron Sims II, Nonny Abrajano, Razi Hashmi, Eric Lin, Gaylene Kanoyton, Suja Amir, Hon. Nancy Rodrigues, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Barton, Dr. William O'Hare, S. Beth Nolan, Julian Walker, Jon Alger, Gia Genie Nguyen Le, Sarah Gross, Steve Kast, Sree Nagireddi, Hyun Lee, Dr. Gregory Howard, Aida Pacheco, Monica Sarmiento, Dr. Elda Stanco Downey, Dr. Leo Whittaker, Rev. Kevin Chandler, Razi Hashmi, Jonathan Zur, Jim Dau, Ashley Reynolds Marshall, Beth O'Connor*
28 Virginia Complete Count members in attendance

Surrogates: *Carah Whaley (substitute for John Alger),*

Absent:

Vincent Ammann, President John Alger, Dr. James Fedderman, Caryn Foster Durham, Hon. Michael Futrell
5 Virginia Complete Count members absent

Guests:

Ronald E. Brown, Regional Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau
Nun Othman-Yousif, Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau- Washington D.C.
Shirley Gilliam, Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau- Petersburg
Shannon Ellis, Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau - Richmond County

Governor's Office Staff Present:

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Traci Deshazor, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth
Fernando Mercado-Violand, Special Assistant and the Director of Latino Outreach
Max Cook, Intern, Secretary of the Commonwealth

Call to Order

The Honorable Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia, called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Oath of New Members

Secretary Thomasson administered the Oath for new members joining the Virginia Complete Count Commission.

Opening Remarks

Secretary Thomasson provided opening remarks outlining the meeting and our guest speakers Assistant Attorneys General Justin Bell and Mona Siddiqui. Mr. Bell will be presenting on FOIA. Mrs. Siddiqui will be presenting on the status of the court case New York v. United States Department of Commerce regarding the citizenship question.

General Discussion on Objectives and Vision

Deputy Secretary Traci Deshazor:

Prompts discussion by asking the group to define the commission's purpose and primary objectives

Question: *Commissioner Aida Pacheco, what is our role? What will we actually be doing? Will we just be tasked with transmitting resources?*

Response: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau*

We hope that the commission will serve as more than a resource. We are the voices of Virginia, as you all represent various communities.

Comment: *Objective vs mission*

Question: *Commissioner Genie Nguyen*

Is the role of our Commission to support the work of the United States Census Bureau?

Response: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau- We are hoping to collaborate closely and benefit from the expertise of the commission.*

Question: *Commissioner Gilbert Bland*

Is it implicit that we are advocates?

Response: *Commissioner Sarmiento- Many of us are advocates in our other capacities, so I think we are.*

Question: *Commissioner Gilbert Bland*

Where do we all stand on advocacy- will we take a stand on certain issues such as the Citizenship question?

Response: *Commissioner Genie Nguyen*

Advocacy should be based on getting an accurate count so that our communities get the funding we deserve. I think it's important that we add 2020 Census to our mission statement.

Question: *Commissioner Monica Sarmiento*

The issue with non citizens working for the Census, and what was stated and what is on the website. Can the Commission make a statement to make this change?

Response: *Commissioner Genie Nguyen*

If it fits our purpose and meets our goal, I think that there should be an effort to advocate for these issues.

Response: *Secretary Thomasson*

Our job is not to advocate on behalf of a decision or not, but to educate our community about the issue.

Commission members share their recommendations for Objectives

Deputy Secretary DeShazor facilitated this portion of the meeting asking Commissioners to share one or two words that come to mind as they consider this work.

Objectives: *Commissioners brainstormed and came up with the following:*

- Open and transparent*
- Counting all Virginians*
- Education (by in- meeting people where they are)*
- Support*
- Communication*
- Outreach*
- Engagement*
- Advocacy*
- Integrity*
- Purpose and our “why”*
- Motivation*
- Trust*
- Empowerment*

Objective and Mission Defined by the Virginia Complete Count Commission

The mission of the Virginia Complete Count Commission is to serve as a trusted voice and resource to educate, empower, and engage all communities for the purpose of ensuring that everyone who lives in the Commonwealth of Virginia is counted in the 2020 Census.

General Discussion on Vision

Comment: *Commissioner Aida Pacheco- Vision- all communities have the resources they need*

Comment: Commissioner Gaylene Kanoyton- Open and transparent

Comment: Commissioner Gilbert Bland- Integrity

Comment: Commissioner Reggie Tupponce- If you are under counted you are underrepresented

Comment: Ms. Whaley Capacity building and community building

Comment: Commissioner S. Beth Nolan- They need resources not just because but it allows everyone to thrive.

Question Commissioner Bland: Where are college students counted

Response: Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau- Where they are they are residing most of the year so their universities.

Comment: Commissioner Leo Whittaker

When we looked at the vision, we used some key words like empowerment, educate, engage. Could we take them and move them under here to help extrapolate goals?

Drafting of Virginia Complete Count Commission Vision

- The Vision of the Virginia Complete Count Commission is that every community has the opportunity to equitably leverage resources they need
- Commissioner Hashmi-We aspire to accurately represent and appropriately serve the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia through open and transparent means to leverage resource to create equitable opportunities
- Everyone counts and every community matters.

Objective and Mission Defined by the Virginia Complete Count Commission

Our vision is a thriving Commonwealth where everyone counts and every community matters, where every person who lives in Virginia has equitable access to opportunities, resources, and representation.

General Discussion on Identifying Goals

Comment: Commissioner O'Hare - Reducing the undercounts.

Comment: Commissioner Eric Lin- Removing census barriers, motivating communities to respond.

Comment: Commissioner Gaylene Kanoyton - Developing partnerships.

Comment: Commissioner Leo Whittaker - something needs to be said about the census takers; they should have an identifiable presence for the community they are serving.

Comment: Secretary Thomasson - we need to educate about job opportunities so we can have a diverse group of census takers

Question: Commissioner Aida Pacheco - census takers should have some sort of training and competency; sustainability should be something important - can this be an ongoing education and communication?

Response: Deputy Secretary DeShazor - we're straying from focus of the 2020 census - we do have advisory boards. The focus of sustainability maybe be given to them.

Response: Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau

There are continuous surveys from the census and encouragement for those are also important; there are also smaller CCCs and we need to be a model and a contact for those as well - outreach to those cccs should be a goal of this commission.

Comment: Secretary Thomasson - Max and Fernando have been working on the list of local Complete Count Commissions.

Question: Commissioner Ashley Marshall - Are there efforts to create local CCC's?

Response: Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau - yes, we are contacting cities and counties

Comment: Commissioner Suja Amir - Developing trust and building trust should be one of our goals

Comment: Commissioner Aida Pacheco - agreed, emphasis on building trust and relationships; add cultural competency

Comment: Commissioner Jim Dau - making people feels secure with participating with the fed - they may trust the individual but not the Federal Government.

Comment: Commissioner S. Beth Nolan - There are already voices which communities trust. Is the goal of this commission to be a resource for those voices

Comment: Commissioner Reggie Tupponce - This is especially a concern for native american tribes, they need to be a focus on the right messaging because of the historical distrust.

Question: Commissioner Gaylene Kanoyton

Is it possible to draft resolutions for local governments?

Do you have a draft we can use to go to local governments and request a Complete Count Commission be formed?

Response: Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau

There is some effort on the part of the Census Bureau to help with the establishment of these local complete county commissions.

Question: Commissioner Leo Whittaker

Are we able to identify areas of the previous census where there are undercounts that we can focus?

Response:

Secretary Thomasson -

We have begun to look through census data to try to find these areas, they are available through the ROAM tools provided in the first meeting.

Response:

Ronald E. Brown U.S. Census Bureau - We do not have information on why areas may have been undercounted and the only way we could get this info is from final reports of CCCs .

Comment: Commissioner Reggie Tupponce

One of our goals should be to submit a final report.

Question: Commissioner Nancy Rodrigues

Should one of our goal be to support the Census in helping them find staff, also how much staff and jobs available will there be in Virginia and how many have been hired?

Response: Ronald E. Brown U.S. Census Bureaus: *So far we have eight partnership specialist for 2020, we had 50 partnership specialist this time in 2010. Nationwide we have 1501 partnership specialists in 2010 by this time we had 3000 partnership specialists. I will get this info to SoC; we are still and will be still looking for field workers because we need a presence throughout the commonwealth. We need to do more than just raise awareness of these jobs, we need to provide places and people for training, we are hoping that this commission can help in those efforts.*

Question: Commissioner Nonny Abrajano - *how soon can people inquiring into jobs find out their status?*

Response: Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau

That is difficult right now because of the shutdown we don't have the ability to process applications.

Comment: *Commissioner Jim Dau - We need to assure people of their safety and anonymity as the census proceeds and how they should protect themselves.*

Question: *Commissioner Bland - When you're hiring, do you have the ability or willingness to contract out this work*

Response: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau - No because of the sensitivity of the information, but couldn't this help if it were from trusted groups like the NAACP. It has been discussed in the past but could not work*

Goals Identified by the Virginia Complete Count Commission

- *Accurately represented and appropriately served*
- *Open and transparent communication*
- *Integrity*
- *Reducing the undercounts*
- *Removing Barriers and Creating Motivations*
- *Developing partnerships*
- *Advocate for diversity of employment among Census staff*
- *Sustainable education and engagement*
- *Partner and Support Local Complete Count Committees and Commissions*
- *Building relationships and developing trust with communities across the Commonwealth to increase participation*
- *Leverage resources to support local governments in creating Local Complete Count efforts*
- *Support regional non-profit efforts*
- *Submit a final report*
- *Sharing information effectively from organizations represented to maximize outreach*
- *Helping community members protect themselves from potential fraudulent activity and protecting data from community members*
- *Educate on the full impact of the 2020 Census, from government funding, to important data that impacts economic development*
- *Implement timelines and benchmarks to mark the success of our efforts*

General Discussion on Committee Structure

Secretary Thomasson prompts a discussion on the proposed committee structure

Question: *Commissioner Bill O'Hare*

Would it be beneficial to create subcommittees?

Response: Secretary Thomasson

This has been a question we've been considering. The U.S. Census Bureau have given some suggested communities but are those really the best ones to focus on?

Comment: Commissioner Monica Sarmiento

Rural vs. Urban communities is a concern; rural communities are frequently overlooked.

Comment: Commissioner Eric Lin – *we need to look more at the intersection and we need to look regionally – dem, regional, specific communities*

Comment: Secretary Thomasson – *how do we serve as a conduit of info sharing connecting challenges and communities.*

Update on The Status of the Citizenship Question Assistant Attorney General Mona Siddiqui

New York vs. United States Department of Commerce was filed in the Southern District of New York, by 20 states and 6 cities, including the Commonwealth of Virginia, to remove the citizenship question from the U.S. Census.

Case Presented by the Office of the Attorney General of Virginia

- *The case was initiated in by the New York attorney General, and Virginia joined-many Virginians supported these efforts by testifying how the question will negatively impact their communities.*
- *Virginians that supported the Office of the Attorney General's case against the census question, Fernando Mercado-Violand from the Office of the Governor and Monica Sarmiento from VACIR and a commissioner on the VCCC.*

Details on the Case

The question would create a massive undercount in immigrant communities. This would results in states losing funding and the congressional representation.

Finding of Facts

- *U.S Secretary of Commerce Ross violated the APA, the Administration Process Act.*
- *Certain limitations regarding the Census Act, disallow the addition of a problematic question.*
- *Arbitrary and capricious because it ran counter to the agencies recommendation.*
- *The reasoning of the additional question was pretextual.*

What Happens Next?

- *The Department of Commerce can appeal to SCOTUS, but has yet not moved because cases in other circuit courts need to be consolidated before further action can be taken.*
- *As of now there cannot be a Citizenship question, due to 2020 fast approaching it is unlikely that the Department of Commerce can provide an alternative question.*

Citizenship Question General Q/A

Question: *Commissioner Bill O'Hare- How will this decision affect the case in Maryland?*

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Siddiqui*

If they are reviewing a case outside the scope of New York v. Department of Commerce than it may render different result.

Question: *Commissioner Eric Lin- Can you clarify the point you made about running out of time?*

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Siddiqui*

The administrative process act requests a different timeline, and the APA demands that the time it would take to take into effect will not make it in time for the 2020 Census

Question: *Commissioner S. Beth Nolan: The SCOTUS, can overturn that decision and allow the Department of Commerce to keep the question correct?*

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Siddiqui*

That is possible, so far the highest court has ruled that it can't but it is possible for a decision to come out during the summer from the SCOTUS.

Question: *Commissioner Jim Dau: Is there anything that can keep state CCC to have a citizenship committee or task force to provide guidance on navigating this question?*

Response: *Secretary Thomasson*

As a commission we are tasked with how do we message according to our communities.

Response: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau*

You will be working on the time of messaging to increase participation

Question: *Commissioner Julian Walker*

What happens if they do not respond to the citizenship question?

Response: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau*

If they leave any part of the form un answered they will receive a form of communication or outreach from the Census Bureau. By law every question needs to be answered. We don't use it as a sledge hammer, but we do let people know.

Question: *Commissioner Genie Nguyen: How does the undercount on affect the voting districts?*

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Siddiqui*

We anticipate that if there is a citizenship question there will be an undercount, in total, with citizens and with non-citizens. The districts are defined by all residents counted in the Census, not just citizens.

Question: *Bill O'Hare: What does the Commonwealth plan to do on this issue.*

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Siddiqui*

We anticipate that they will file a motion in joining. Virginia will continue to support on New York vs. Department of Commerce.

Question: *Terron Sims: When is the deadline of the printing of the form?*

Response: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau*

It should already be printed based on previous Census.

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Siddiqui*

The court ruled that it must follow the A.P.A, that is what New York defined based on this requirement, it can't get the question reinserted in time if it were to follow the A.P.A.

Comment: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census Bureau*

We do not enforce, we are not a law enforcement agency. We are collecting information, if people do not provide a response there will be a follow attempt to reach them. A phone call or a knock on their door.

Question: *Commissioner Bill O'Hare*

Who will be doing the follow up, would it be USCB or DOJ?

Response: *Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census*

That will be at the discretion of the Secretary of Commerce, but the Census does not share personal individual information with the any other government agency.

Question: *Commissioner Leo Whitaker*

A lot of the previously assumed safe guards are up in the air during this administration how can be sure that won't change.

Response: Ronald E. Brown, U.S. Census

There have been previous attempts to breach the Census privacy practices, for example the Patriot Act and we have protected citizens.

General Discussion on Committee Structure (Continued):

Comment: Commissioner Barton- Baptist Church Leaders, last chance to talk to them before the Census. Faith communities provide access to rural areas.

Response: Hashmi - once we come up with a list of subcommittees, people should go to a few since they are part of multiple communities

Comment: Commissioner Eric Lin - Region are the easiest meetings to have as opposed to different demographics

Response: Secretary Thomasson

That is harder with less centralized areas. As the statewide VCCC should be working on the broader state in general, not barring the chance for more regional groups to meet

Response: Commissioner Beth Nolan

There are already regional CCCs and we can and should work to tap into those, but as the State commission we should be focusing on finding broader issues. Additionally, messaging needs to be based around community, not region.

Comment: Ronald E Brown, U.S. Census Bureau

The central offices will be able to assist with finding strategies and objectives

Comment: Commissioner Jonathan Zur

My interpretation of our goal is to make sure those communities which have been marginalized or historically undercounted should be the priority over regional.

Question: Commissioner Rev Barton

Are we supposed to be surrogates or representatives of the census?

Response: Secretary Thomasson - This will be a conversation later

Question: Secretary Thomasson

Committees: We need to debate the merits of the groups listed in the census bureau and what would these subcommittees really look like? To what extent do we need to subdivide subcommittees? Should any of those listed on the CB website be combined?

Response: Commissioner Gilbert Bland

As it relates to urban communities, we should not separate black and white individuals

Comment: Commissioner Genie Nguyen

We should address the “How census data is used” toward each community. Many of the people in my community either cannot understand the language, or do not have access to technology.

Question: Commissioner Genie Nguyen - Can subcommittees add other members or are they only those in the VCCC

Response: Deputy Secretary DeShazor

Our goal is to first focus on the Commission and then discuss how we may consider expanding as necessary

Question: Commissioner Bill O’Hare

To add, do we need your Thomasson approval?

Response:

Secretary Thomasson

I don't know that yet

Response:

Deputy Secretary DeShazor

We'll need to look at what these committees are first

Committee Plan Suggested: Commissioners discussed which subcommittees they think will be critical to their efforts.

Suggested Committees from the U.S. Census

- Government
- Local Complete Count Coordination
- Workforce development
- Business
- Faith-based community
- Education
- Higher Ed/ Young Children
- Media
- Technology
- Digital Organizing
- Community organizations

Any other subcommittees?

- Rural/Urban Communities*
- Regional*
- Students*
- Hard to Count Constituency Groups*
- Seniors*

General Discussion On Work Plan

Deputy Secretary DeShazor -Prompts the discussion by reminding Commissioners to keep in mind the values, views, and mission discussed earlier and reminds the group that now is when we decide how we are going to reach communities.

Comment: *Commissioner Eric Lin*

We have folks working on who needs to be targeted and who is working on reaching those people already; we also need to figure out a list of community resources.

Question: *Commissioner Terron Sims*

We can't backward plan right now because we don't have a solid timeline. What is our timeline?

Response: *Secretary Thomasson*

Census day is April 1st 2020 but you can start filling it out before that (around mid-march); and you have until about June until U.S. Census Bureau really starts looking for responses; one of our early goals must be to find census workers; then we need to figure out how to get out the word for the census.

Comment: *Commissioner Jim Dau*

The handout from last meeting has a general outline included and we can help work backward from that now

Question: *Commissioner Nonny Abrajano*

Do we have a website?

Response: *Secretary Thomasson*

We are planning on having one soon, we will keep the commission posted.

Comment: *Commissioner Nonny Abrajano*

We should ensure that there is available translation.

Comment: *Commissioner Leo Whittaker -*

As well as readable/listenable print.

Comment: *Commissioner Gaylene Kanoyton - there are outside organizations which will*

help translate; we also need a toolkit for how educate people in their areas; we've talked about urban and rural, but we need not forget suburban

Question: *Commissioner Aida Pacheco - How will toolkit be disseminated? Kanoyton - through community meetings?*

Response: *Thomasson - we will also have online toolkits and help*

Work Plan Developed By Commissioners

- *Identifying Committees and Subcommittees*
- *Develop a list of community resources, events, gatherings and identify potential Census Ambassadors to serve/support Local Complete Count Committees*
- *April 1 2020 our message has to be delivered*
- *Early Stage: Ensuring that the Census has a strong staff by sharing job postings and ensuring full representation*
- *Develop a tool-kit by facilitating access to resources to recruit Census ambassadors from local organizations to educate their community*

Reflect on U.S. Census Bureau Suggested Timeline and Work Plan

- *Local governments and community leaders throughout the nation participate in activities highlighting the message that the 2020 Census is imminent and that it is easy, important and safe to participate.*
 - *Education Phase – 2018 - 2019*
 - *Awareness Phase – January – February 2020*
 - *Motivation Phase – March – May 2020*
 - *Reminder Phase – May – July 2020*
 - *Thank You Phase – Starts July 2020*

Education Phase: Action Steps for now thru December 2019

- *Conduct CCC training for members*
- *Develop a work plan for promoting the census and motivating participation in your community*
- *Hold regular meetings to report on tasks, other activities, including subcommittee reports*
- *Proceed with census awareness-building activities generated by the committee or subcommittees*
- *Evaluate the effectiveness of CCC activities*

- *Conduct at least one census awareness-building activity each month*

Awareness Phase: Action steps starting January 2020

- *Hold regular CCC and subcommittee meetings*
- *Finalize plans for activities surrounding responding to the census*
- *Review task lists and subcommittee plans*
- *Proceed with 2020 Census activities*
- *Finalize plans for activities to encourage households to complete and respond to the census*
- *Develop and finalize plans for motivating residents who do not participate to cooperate with census takers during nonresponse follow-up*

Action steps for March 2020 – April 2020

- *Hold weekly CCC and subcommittee meetings*
- *Review and modify plans to promote responding to the census activities*
- *Send a news release highlighting the 2020 Census activity schedule*
- *Encourage households to respond accurately and expediently*
- *Prepare to implement activities for residents who do not return their questionnaire*
- *Census Bureau plans to provide response rate numbers starting in April. Response rates may be used to determine where more outreach is needed*

Action steps for May 2020 – July 2020

- *Encourage every household that did not respond that they still can respond or wait for the census taker to knock on their door.*
- *Continue to meet and review the CCC plans. Please plan to use the 2020 daily response rates that will become available to the public in April to implement your plans to encourage cooperation.*
- *Prepare a summary report of committee activities and member feedback*
- *Share this report with your Partnership Specialist*
- *Celebrate the success of the 2020 Census and recognize the efforts of the CCC members*
- *Thank your community for their support and response*

Components of a CCC Work Plan

Overview

- *Summary of the goals and objectives of the CCC and description of the community*
- *Committee Structure*

- *Identify the name of the CCC*
- *Describe the structure of the committee*
- *Develop strategies for reaching their objectives*
Timeline Develop broad timetable of events and activities with dates

Reporting

- *Include a report of subcommittee activities to the committee*
- *Modify future activities as needed based on feedback*
- *Thank you: Include strategies for thanking committee members, the community and others who provide support*
- *Final Report: Prepare a final evaluation of your activities and successes to help the Census Bureau guide future committees*

FOIA Presentation Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell: Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell led the group in a discussion about the Freedom of Information Act and board convening guidance.

FOIA Introduction

- *Reading the text of FOIA is essential all commission members must read this section two weeks after taking the oath.*

Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell

- *Meetings and records are to be available*
- *Records must be available - they shouldn't have anything to hide anyway*
- *All records are considered public records (emails and handouts as well) - anything transferred during meeting times as well*

Comment: Secretary Thomasson

One way to make this all very easy is that there is a vccc email address from which all correspondence will come. CC this email address whenever contacting another member of the ccc as well.

Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell

- *FOIA violations are not criminal but may have a civil penalty*
- *Typically FOIA requests are through the formal channels, but they could be any sort of formal or informal request*
- *You can direct to Thomasson*
- *Must be provided to any Virginian or any media member*
- *Knowing violations are serious and punished strictly with fines*
- *This includes texts and third party messages - separate accounts are a good idea*
- *The regulation does not need to be invoked - any request is a FOIA request.*

Emails

- *Emails are not private when related to the VCCC*
- *If you don't want there to be a record, don't send an email*
- *(Holland) If my organization works on the census, is that included in FOIA? - not unless you are talking about the work of the VCCC - Information on the Census is different than information specifically on VCCC*
- *(Sarmiento) Outside of this commission, several of us serve on similar bodies; does this information fall under FOIA? - not if you are working as a member of THAT body instead of VCCC.*
- *(Dau) Do we need to keep a copy of everything we get in this commission? - not necessarily because there will probably be a copy elsewhere. Handwritten notes are considered a draft, not necessarily a record*

Meetings

- *Wherever three or more are discussing (in any setting) the VCCC, it is a meeting*

Question: Commissioner Eric Lin

I thought these meetings could not exist via telephone - meetings can use a telephone as long as a quorum exists physically.

Response: Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell

*You cannot plan to have a threeway skype call to discuss vccc or else that would be an electronic meeting which is not public. The Public can call in as well if they are notified - **no board member can have more convenience or power than the public.** There has to be a majority of physically present members if there is going to be a meeting*

Question: Commissioner Bland

Would you prefer us not to talk to press?

Response: Secretary Thomasson

That depends on who is contacting you and what questions are being asked. If it's about your feelings or a general question, you can. If it's specific, refer to the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Office.

Question: Commissioner Eric Lin how many days in advance do we need to advertise?

Response:

At least three days for the Secretary of the Commonwealth to post it to the Commonwealth Calendar.

Comment: Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell

No decisions can be made unless at a public meeting

Questions: *Do additions to subcommittees count toward quorum?*

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell*

No exact answer, but if applying liberally, probably. Rapid fire group email discussions become a meeting, BCC'ing can help prevent this issue.

Question: *Commissioner Gilbert Bland*

Do presentations trigger FOIA?

Response: *Assistant Attorney General Justin Bell*

Not like a meeting does, they are a widely attended events.

Next Steps

Secretary Thomasson begins to close out the meeting. Reminds commission that an infographic will be coming soon

Deputy Secretary DeShazor: Reporting structure will be put together soon as we try to track speaking engagements and other events to track metrics for our outreach.

Meeting adjourned at 2:57 P.M.

Next Meeting: February 27, 2019